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Department of State
Operations Center

(GUYANA WORKING GROUP)

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Situation Report No. 18

Situation in Guyana as of 0730 hours (EST), November 24, 19

Embassy Georgetown has just reported by telephone that the number of bodies in Jonestown is now estimated at closer to 600 than to 400. Detailed reasons for this new count are not available. Last night we were told that additional bodies of infants especially were found underneath when bodies were picked up. It also appears that the initial 400-410 count may have been only a rough estimate.

Four aircraft have now arrived at Dover AFB bearing the remains of 270 persons. One C-141 is standing by in Puerto Rico and will proceed to Georgetown as additional bodies are brought down from Jonestown. SCA is continuing its efforts to locate next of kin. So far, it has not been possible to locate next of kin for 65 of the 174 dead identified in Guyana.

The U.S. Joint Task Commander in Guyana intends to continue shuttling HH-53s to Jonestown today for the recovery of bodies. Should the weather hold and no maintenance problems be encountered, it is anticipated that all the first 400 bodies will be recovered by late this afternoon and en route to the U.S. this evening. Because transfer cases will have to be cleaned and returned to Guyana removal of a substantial number of additional bodies will require another 24-48 hours. Beginning today, additional search and visual reconnaissance efforts, also utilizing loudspeakers, will be undertaken in the Jonestown area for survivors.

DOD is working to locate the equipment and supplies requested by the Guyanese. Some of the items listed are not in the DOD inventory and will have to be procured from GSA or other sources. We have received the necessary identifying data for the helicopter spare parts; DOD has passed the information to the Bell Corporation. The question of funding the purchase of the parts remains to be resolved.

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For John A. Bushnell
ARA Director
Guyana Working Group

Rich Castrodale
Senior Watch Officer

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